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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 /078 W
----------045916 071456Z /46
O R 071255Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5162
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 2317

E,O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SREF, WZ, RH
SUBJECT: GIBSON SITHOLE

1. EMBOFF HAS INQUIRED INTO GIBSON SITHOLE'S BONA FIDES SINCE HE IS BEING WIDELY QUOTED IN SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS. UNHCR REP SABITI STATED THAT SITHOLE SHOWED UP APPROXIMATELY TEN DAYS AGO CLAIMING TO BE REV. SITHOLE'S SON. HE ALLEGED THAT HE HAD LEFT UNIVERSITY OF RHODESIA WHERE HE HAD BEEN STUDYING LAW AND THAT, FOR UNEXPLAINED REASONS, HE HAD GONE TO MAPUTO WHERE HE WAS LIVING WITH MUGABE. HE SAID HE FLED MOZAMBIQUE FEARING THAT OTHER REFUGEES INTENDED HIM BODILY HARM BECAUSE OF HIS FATHER'S POLITICAL ACTIONS IN RHODESIA. SABITI QUESTIONED HIS BONA FIDES AS A REFUGEE AND SENT HIM TO THE GOS REFUGEE OFFICE, WHICH SHARED THOSE DOUBTS AND REFUSED TO ISSUE HIM A GOS REFUGEE TRAVEL DOCUMENT.

2. NOEL MKONO CAME TO SWAZILAND AND TALKED TO SABITI ABOUT SITHOLE, AND INFORMED SABITI, SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE THE STORY BROKE, THAT THERE WOULD SOON BE A GROUP OF ZANU PEOPLE COMING
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OUT OF MOZAMBIQUE INTO SWAZILAND. MKONO LEFT SWAZILAND AND APPARENTLY WENT TO THE RHODESIAN GOVERNMENT OFFICE IN PRETORIA, WHICH THEN CABLED THE GOS REQUESTING A REFUGEE TRAVEL DOCUMENT BE ISSUED TO SITHOLE.

3. MKONO RETURNED AFTER THE ZANU ESCAPEES CAME TO SWAZILAND AND WAS PERMITTED TO TALK TO THEM; SITHOLE HAS NOT BEEN ALLOWED

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TO SEE THEM. P.M. SHABANGU, PRIVATE SECRETARY TO THE PRIME MINISTER, AGREED WITH SABITI'S STATEMENT THAT SITHOLE IS NOT RPT NOT AN OFFICIAL OR UNOFFICIAL SPOKESMAN FOR THE ZANU ESCAPEES IN SWAZILAND.

4. SITHOLE HAS TOLD WIDELY DIFFERING STORIES TO LOCAL MEDIA REPS, TO SOUTH AFRICAN PRESS, AND TO SABITI. ONE LOCAL REPORTER INFORMED EMBOFF THAT A LETTER SITHOLE WAS BRANDISHING, SUPPOSEDLY FROM REV. SITHOLE IN RHODESIA, HAD A LOCAL POSTMARK. AT PRESENT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH SITHOLE'S BONA FIDES BUT THE PREVAILING LOCAL OPINION IS THAT HE IS A "PLANT" SENT HERE FR OM RHODESIA TO DRUM UP PUBLICITY ABOUT THE ZANU ESCAPEES.
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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Reference: n/a
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Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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SAS ID: 2088607
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GIBSON SITHOLE
TAGS: PINT, SREF, WZ, RH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/94606479-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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